

THE SAVING POSSIBILITIES OF VIDEO TECHNOLOGY

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Eric M. Smith
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Eric M. Smith

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Faculty Committee

Sam H. Phares

Steve F. Jackson

April 15, 1987

Date

Alvin J. Moore

Dean

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ABSTRACT

The Saving Possibilities of Video Technology

Eric M. Smith

Can the Church utilize video technology in the cause of Christ today? The thesis of this project is that the realm of video technology fosters "saving possibilities" for the church. In addition to the written material a videotape has been produced as a paradigm.

Based upon Martin Heidegger's work, *The Question Concerning Technology*, chapter 2 is devoted to discussion toward the essence of technology. In the chapter, Heidegger's epistemological understanding of technology ultimately illustrates a juxtaposition between the "danger" and the "saving power" of technology in relation to humanity.

Chapter 3 discusses the nature and function of video technology in present and future use. Included is a discussion of Heidegger's concept of "Enframing" as it relates to video technology, then an expansion of the concept of the "saving possibility" as a philosophical

rather than a communications theory approach to video technology. The chapter concludes with a listing and description of potential uses of video in and for the life of the Church.

Central to this project is a videotape, a twenty minute presentation of the life and ministry of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church of Pomona, California. The video was produced as a mission appeal for the purpose of funding the Spanish language ministry of the church. A corresponding commentary discusses the specific application of the theory of "saving possibility" as it has been employed in producing the video. Included is a specific summary of events directly concerned with the production of this video and concurrent applications of a Heideggerian philosophical approach to video production.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In a cinematic trilogy of technological anticipation, George Lucas' "Star Wars" movies have established some images in this culture that may be some fact and not very much fancy. One of the co-stars is a robot named R2-D2, itself a technological wonder. At several times in the sequence of the trilogy, R2 (as it is affectionately known) broadcasts messages in a sort of home hologramatic style. We may not yet afford home holograms (although home video is easily accessible) but the technology of today can produce them. R2-D2 is heroic in his delivery of the saving message.

The present age demonstrates the influence of technological process. If the suggestion is made, "Think of a recent major technological development," every thinking person in western society can name such an event without pause. In many cases, the thinking person can extrapolate about future technological possibilities as well. The rapid

pace of technological evolution is a post-modern epoch. The technology of video production is evolving in step.

A Challenge For The Church

The problem addressed by this project is the largely unaddressed, unanswered challenge to mainline protestantism to utilize video technology in the cause of Christ today. The project includes a video production as one example of an effective use of communications technology for the mission of the Church.

Is Technology a Problem?

Mainline liberal protestantism is a culture with its own set of shared values within the realm of the Christian faith. A portion of this corpus of a shared belief system is the suspicion of technology in general and an additional reluctance to embrace individual technological expressions. This can be easily demonstrated by the tentitiveness and hesitancy which many seminary professors have displayed in their consideration of the use of word processors (an inestimatable aid to those who research and write).

Ministers and directors of education are slow to move the computer to the Sunday School classroom, although

it has been in the public and private classroom for years. Television awareness frequently exists as a one-sided (negative) proposition in many congregations of main-line faith. High technology is often considered the tool (if not the personality) of oppression and de-humanization. Finally, many conservative groups with strong video identity are growing as rapidly as the decline of more mainline groups.

What is necessary is to recognize a new expression of the saving power of Christ today; to provide "vision therapy" for the Church so as to see the redemptive possibility of Christ in technology. This is the theological task of this project. Additionally, a video production will serve as one paradigm of an appropriation and utilization of the saving power of technology as a tool for mission.

Andre Malet's article, "The Believer in the Presence of Technique," represents the realms of faith and technology as separate (though not opposed).¹ Within the article, which is dualistic in its approach, Malet interprets Martin Heidegger's concept of Gestell - what we will later call "Enframing" - in a manner he affirms as given by Heidegger.

1. Andre Malet, "The Believer in the Presence of Technique," Theology and Technology, eds. Carl Mitcham and Jim Grote (Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 1984).

Malet's claim is unjustified as his interpretation of Heidegger's Gestell is so far (in this author's opinion) from Heidegger's intent.

This project relies on and extrapolates from the work of Martin Heidegger most particularly concerning his work entitled, The Question Concerning Technology.

The relevance of this project for church leaders is twofold: (1) it will develop a coherent philosophical/theological approach to technology; and (2) it will provide one tangible example of an effective use of video technology for the mission of the Church.

Thesis

The realm of video technology fosters saving possibilities for the church.

Definition of Major Terms.

Video. Video is an inclusive term for materials assembled through technological development that enable us to store both sight and sound for reproduction on a television set, video recorder, or projection device. Video is an inclusive term referring to broadcast television, cable television, and video cassettes for home use.

Video is the ultimate communication tool for this age. It is the best potential teaching and training tool ever available to the educator and is the "state of the art" in the entertainment industry. Its practical uses for the church are still in a fledgling state, and its potential is undeveloped.

Technology. "Technology" is an ancient concept. Techne is a Greek concept of "bringing forth" which comes not in and of itself but from another. The essence of modern technology is what Martin Heidegger calls "Enframing."

In this project "technology" will be defined through an examination of Heidegger's thought leading to the dichotomy of "the danger" and "the saving power," and addressed through the potential of Heidegger's concept of "the saving power."

Scope and Limitations of the Project

There are three components to this project:

1. The project develops a coherent philosophical/theological approach to "technology" through the work of Martin Heidegger. No attempt has been made to explore or define particular expressions of technology with the exception of those directly concerned with the production

and presentation of video.

2. The project presents a chapter entitled "The Saving Possibilities of Video Technology" which establishes a basis for understanding technology as tool for the expression of redemption.

3. This project presents a video production demonstrating a saving possibility of video technology. This production consists of two parts:

a. A chapter explaining the integration of theories involved in conceiving, creating, and producing a video for the purpose of mission appeal, and

b. A twenty minute video production created to serve as a missional tool of the Riverside (California) District and the California-Pacific Conference Communications Committee of the United Methodist Church.

Integration

This project integrates theological, philosophical, and functional disciplines by establishing a concept of redemption through the "saving power" of technology and then provides a demonstration of this concept.

The steps and tools necessary to accomplish the paradigmatic portion of the project included:

1. Defining the purposes of the video.

2. Establishing the target groups of viewers of the final edited production.

3. Establishing the dominant images of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church as they relate to the values of the target viewing group.

4. Creating a story-board.

5. Selecting appropriate music for the edited production.

6. Writing a script.

7. Establishing a production schedule.

8. Contracting for video equipment use and personnel.

9. Making the arrangements for and involvement in post-production work.

Summary of Chapters

Chapter 1 is an introduction and orientation to this project.

Chapter 2, "The Question Concerning Technology," is essentially a precis of the essay written by Heidegger under the same title. In it, Heidegger establishes an epistemological understanding of technology and ultimately illustrates a juxtaposition between the "danger" and the "saving power" of technology in relation to humanity.

Chapter 3, "The Saving Possibilities of Video Technology," discusses the nature and function of video technology in present and future use. This is followed by a discussion of Heidegger's concept of "Enframing" as it relates to video technology, then an expansion of the concept of the "saving possibility" as a philosophical rather than a communications theory approach to video technology. The chapter concludes with a listing and description of potential uses of video in and for the life of the Church.

Chapter 4, "Paradigm: The Video," discusses the specific application of the theory of "saving possibility" as it has been employed in producing a video about the life and mission of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church. Included is a specific summary of events directly concerned with the production of this video and concurrent applications of a Heideggerian philosophical approach to video production.

Chapter 5: "Conclusion," discusses the relationship of the video to the structures of the United Methodist Church and the use of the video within the structure.

CHAPTER 2

"The Question Concerning Technology"

Martin Heidegger delivered a lecture on November 18, 1955 to the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts entitled: "The Question Concerning Technology." This lecture was the outgrowth of Heidegger's thought springing from another series of lectures under the title, "Insight into That Which Is."

"The Question Concerning Technology" has ultimately become the title and first lecture in a book of related essays written by Heidegger and translated by William Lovitt.¹ This work, supported by other Heidegger texts, is the fundamental tool used in this project to build a philosophical understanding of the essence of technology.

There are several terms and definitions which are explored in order to discuss Heidegger's quest toward the essence of technology. Heidegger, thoroughly concerned

¹
Martin Heidegger, The Question Concerning Technology (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977).

about language, essentially creates his own terminology and usage for his purposes in discussion.

The terms represent concepts which require assembling in much the manner of a logic problem. Heidegger's terms are defined adequately, though not exhaustively, for the purposes of this project while simultaneously assembling these terms in a coherent and supportive structure.

Technology

What is technology? Is it the myriad mechanical processes and products that modern society has come to accept and incorporate? Is it a sophisticated anthropological instrument to provide the means to an end? Yes, but this is only the effect of technology. This view, for Heidegger is "... merely the correct and not yet the true."²

Heidegger wishes to discover the essence of technology. In order to do so, he calls upon the tradition of Western thought and resignifies the Aristotelian concept of four-part causality.

Causality can be represented as pieces of a whole that unite in responsibility for bringing forth something.

²

Heidegger, The Question, 6.

"The four causes are the ways, all belonging at once to each other, of being responsible for something else."³

But what is this responsibility? Heidegger clarifies by recognizing that the four causes are responsible for:

... the presencing of something that presences. The four ways of being responsible bring something into appearance. They let it come forth into presencing. They set it free to that place and so start it on its way, namely, into its complete arrival. ⁴

Bringing-forth

This term, "bringing forth," is employed by Heidegger as a concept representing the uniting of the four causes in harmonious expression. He writes; "They let what is not yet present arrive into presencing. Accordingly, they are unifiedly ruled over by a bringing that brings what presences into appearance."⁵

It is Plato's concept; reclaimed and resignified by Heidegger from the "Symposium" (205b): "Every occasion for whatever passes over and goes forward into presencing from

³Heidegger,The Question, 7.

⁴Heidegger,The Question, 9.

⁵Heidegger,The Question, 10.

that which is not presencing is poiesis, is bringing-forth."⁶

So bringing-forth brings what is concealed into unconcealment; and the bringing forth from concealment into unconcealment is a means of revealing.

Ever concerned with definition and meaning, Heidegger now points out that the Greek concept of revealing was aletheia and the Romans called it veritas. We refer to these as "truth" in the sense of correctness of an idea.

If these few pieces of the puzzle are assembled a larger connectedness can be seen in this way: the essence of technology is a revealing which is grounded in a bringing-forth. The bringing-forth itself is the harmonious interplay of the causality quartet.

Heidegger writes:

Technology is a way of revealing. If we give heed to this, then another whole realm for the essence of technology will open itself up to us. It is the realm of revealing, i.e., of truth.⁷

Technology: Name Origins

The name "technology," has come to us from the

⁶ Plato, "Symposium," Plato: Collected Dialogues, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980). The difference in wording is due to reliance upon Heidegger's translation.

⁷ Heidegger, The Question, 12.

Greek, "Technikon," which means that which belongs to "techne." There are two pertinent considerations in the definition.

First, the Greek, techne, refers both to the activities and skills of a craftsman, and to the arts of the mind and the fine arts. Second, the word techne is closely linked to the word episteme. Both of these words are used to express knowing in the most broad manner.

Heidegger gives us this example:

Whoever builds a house or a ship or forges a sacrificial chalice reveals what is to be brought forth, according to the perspectives of the four modes of occasioning. This revealing gathers together in advance the aspect and the matter of a ship or house, with a view to the finished thing envisioned as completed, and from this gathering determines the manner of its construction. Thus what is decisive in techne does not lie at all in making and manipulating nor in the using of means, but rather in the aforementioned revealing. It is as revealing, and not as manufacturing, that techne is a bringing forth. ⁸

Challenging and Setting-Upon

The Greek concept of techne is instructive in the search for the essence of technology, yet it could be argued that the ancient understanding is not related to modern technology. Heidegger acknowledges that this argu-

⁸ Heidegger, The Question, 13.

ment has some merit. He proceeds in discussion to point out the precise variance between ancient techne and modern technology.

The revealing of ancient techne has evolved throughout the centuries. The revealing of modern technology is not the same "bringing-forth" that the ancients practiced. Instead, the revealing of modern technology is; "... a challenging which puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such."⁹

Heidegger gives as example a field that was once farmed but is now challenged into the production of coal and ore. Another example is the now technological nature of agricultural method:

The field that the peasant formerly cultivated and set in order appears differently than it did when to set in order still meant to take care of and to maintain. The work of the peasant does not challenge the soil of the field. In the sowing of the grain it places the seed in the keeping of the forces of growth and watches over its increase. But meanwhile even the cultivation of the field has come under the grip of another kind of setting-in-order, which sets upon nature. It sets upon it in the sense of challenging it. Agriculture is now the mechanized food industry.¹⁰

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Heidegger, The Question, 14.

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Heidegger, The Question, 15.

Standing-Reserve

The nature of modern technology is to set upon nature in the sense of a challenging forth of resource for energy. Because of the wide scope of modern technology, virtually nothing is left unaffected by this actual or potential setting-upon.

Heidegger says:

That challenging happens in that energy concealed in nature is unlocked, what is unlocked is transformed, what is transformed is stored up, what is stored up is, in turn, distributed, and what is distributed is switched about ever anew. Unlocking, transforming, storing, distributing, and switching about are ways of revealing. But the revealing never simply comes to an end. ¹¹

Essentially then, the unconcealment which comes about as a result of the setting-upon that challenges orders all of nature. This ordering requires that everything, everywhere stand by. Heidegger names this the "standing-reserve." He explains:

The word expresses here something more than "stock." It designates nothing less than the way in which everything presences that is wrought upon by the challenging revealing. Whatever stands by in the sense of standing-reserve no longer stands over against us as object. ¹²

¹¹Heidegger, The Question, 17.

¹²Heidegger, The Question, 17.

The Place of Humanity

What is the place of humanity in this challenging forth and setting upon? In this ordering, what becomes standing reserve? Does humanity, in the ordering of things, become standing-reserve itself? No, says Heidegger:

Since man drives technology forward, he takes part in ordering as a way of revealing. But the unconcealment itself, within which ordering unfolds, is never a human handiwork...." 13

Yet if this unconcealment is not human handiwork, from whence is its origin? Heidegger suggests that the answer may be apprehended in meditation. "The unconcealment of the unconcealed has already come to pass whenever it calls man forth into the modes of revealing allotted to him."14

Humanity is, in a sense, compelled to the challenging of the ordering implicit within modern technology. "That challenging gathers man into ordering. This gathering concentrates man upon ordering the real as standing-reserve."15

¹³Heidegger, The Question, 18.

¹⁴Heidegger, The Question, 19.

¹⁵Heidegger, The Question, 19.

Enframing

This is the name that Heidegger has placed upon the compulsion of humanity to order everything as standing-reserve. Enframing is an English translation of the German, Gestell. Heidegger takes this word and, as he says, dares to use it in a sense that has been thoroughly unfamiliar up to now. Here he states his meaning precisely:

Enframing means the gathering together of that setting-upon which sets upon man, i.e., challenges him forth, to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve. Enframing means that way of revealing which holds sway in the essence of modern technology and which is itself nothing technological. 16

The advent of Enframing places humanity in a new posture as regards all of history. Enframing is really a new realm of humanity, which has been coming toward its own existence in chronological relationship to history. It is only recognized after its advent. Some of this sentiment can be captured in the following statement:

Therefore, in the realm of thinking, a painstaking effort to think through still more primally what was primally thought is not the absurd wish to revive what is past, but rather the sober readiness to be astounded before the coming of what is early. 17

Enframing has started humanity upon a way. Humanity

¹⁶Heidegger, The Question, 20.

¹⁷Heidegger, The Question, 22.

has been sent in the sense of being destined, and this destining is experienced as a corporate ordination. Heidegger clarifies this thought as follows:

The essence of modern technology lies in Enframing. Enframing belongs within the destining of revealing. These sentences express something different from the talk that we hear more frequently, to the effect that technology is the fate of our age...." 18

The Danger and the Saving Power in
the Destining of Revealing

Heidegger implies that there is a paradox present in the experience of humanity as destined in revealing. The possibilities exist that, first, humanity may become so caught up in the revealing of ordering that all standards or ethics in behavior may be derived from this basis only and, as a result, any other possibility would be thwarted. Then the second, more positive possibility, that humanity (or "man" as Heidegger writes) may draw more near "... to the essence of what is unconcealed and to its unconcealment, in order that he might experience as his essence his needed belonging to revealing.¹⁹

¹⁸Heidegger, The Question, 25.

¹⁹Heidegger, The Question, 26.

Heidegger places humanity between these two positions and states that faced with this tension and potential movement in either direction, humanity encounters danger. He states:

Thus where everything that presences exhibits itself in the light of a cause-effect coherence, even God can, for representational thinking, lose all that is exalted and holy, the mysteriousness of his distance.... He then becomes, even in theology, the god of the philosophers, namely, of those who define the unconcealed and the concealed in terms of the causality of making, without ever considering the essential origin of this causality. 20

Continuing to develop the theme of danger, Heidegger identifies and explores supreme danger in two ways:

As soon as what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but does so, rather, exclusively as standing-reserve, and man in the midst of objectlessness is nothing but the orderer of the standing-reserve, then he comes to the very brink of a precipitous fall; that is, he comes to the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing-reserve. 21

It is at this point of falling, or failing, that humanity can lose perspective of reality and supplant it for illusion or even perhaps delusion. Heidegger explains:

Man stands so decisively in attendance on the challenging-forth of Enframing that he does not apprehend Enframing as a claim, that he fails to see himself as the one spoken to, and hence also

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Heidegger, The Question, 26.

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Heidegger, The Question, 27.

fails in every way to hear in what respect he exists, from out of his essence... 22

This is a disorienting of humanity in relationship toward our own essence that takes place within Enframing. Enframing, a way of revealing, is the antecedent of another method of revealing, namely bringing-forth. Yet because of this next step in the development of revealing in Enframing, humanity may miss the evolution of revealing through bringing-forth and encounter only Enframing. Heidegger writes:

Thus the challenging Enframing not only conceals a former way of revealing, bringing-forth, but it conceals revealing itself and with it That wherein unconcealment, i.e. truth, comes to pass. 23

And he continues;

What is dangerous is not technology. There is no demonry of technology, but rather there is the mystery of its essence. The essence of technology, as a destining of revealing, is the danger. 24

Heidegger now asks his reader to consider Enframing in the sense of destining and danger. Enframing is danger in the sense that it may restrain humanity from encountering more original or primal truth than what may be apprehended through Enframing. This, says Heidegger, is danger in the highest sense.

²³Heidegger, The Question, 27.

²⁴Heidegger, The Question, 28.

"But where danger is, grows the saving power also."²⁵ This is a line of the poetry of Holderlin. Heidegger uses it to turn his readers toward consideration of the other side of the mystery of the essence of technology:

It is precisely in Enframing which threatens to sweep man away into ordering as the supposed single way of revealing, and so thrusts man into the danger of the surrender of his free essence - it is precisely in this extreme danger that the innermost indestructible belongingness of man within granting may come to light, provided that we, for our part, begin to pay heed to the coming to presence of technology.

Thus the coming to presence of technology harbors in itself what we least suspect, the possible arising of the saving power. ²⁶

The essence of technology, says Heidegger, is ambiguous in a lofty sense. We are beholding a mystery which holds within itself both supreme danger and also saving power; "...but human reflection can ponder the fact that all saving power must be of a higher essence than what is endangered...."²⁷

²⁵Heidegger, The Question, 28.

²⁶Heidegger, The Question, 32.

²⁷Heidegger, The Question, 34.

Techne and Technology

In the history of Western civilization, and particularly the Greeks, techne had a broader meaning than technology. Techne was a bringing-forth of truth, of art. Art was called techne. As Heidegger recalls for us: "Once there was a time when the bringing-forth of the true into the beautiful was called techne."²⁸

Summation of "The Question Concerning Technology"

Where Heidegger wants to lead us through questioning concerning the essence of technology is to the realization of the potential of technology to be as freeing as it is enslaving; to be as artistic as mechanistic; to be a greater destining for humanity toward truth and beauty than illusion and delusion. Yet this quest is not fulfilled; "...we bear witness to the crisis that in our sheer preoccupation with technology we do not yet experience the coming to presence of technology..."²⁹

The task of this project is to emphasize what, in

²⁸ Heidegger, The Question, 34.

²⁹ Heidegger, The Question, 35.

Heideggerian terminology, are the saving possibilities, as opposed to the danger, of technology - using video technology as a paradigm.

CHAPTER 3

The Saving Possibilities of Video Technology

The Enframing Model of Video Technology

Recall Heidegger's concept of Ge-stell, or Enframing. The word, in its English translation, lends itself to use in the realm of discourse concerning video. For video, like film, is a connected series of frames, or images, that move at such a pace in concert with magnification, projection, amplification, and light, that we cannot perceive the individual frame without slowing the process to a near halt.

Enframing then, for our purposes even if Heidegger might momentarily raise an eyebrow at such a use, can represent the processes involved in video production in a technologically generic fashion.¹ It may be said in Heideg-

¹A generic relationship of Enframing to video technology is not Heidegger's concept. It is pursued here in the belief that, in a practical sense, a helpful model - an Heideggerian approach to video production - can be built upon the foundation of his work.

gers' words, "The essence of video (our word) technology lies in enframing."²

Enframing is a challenging forth of reality as we perceive it, to be ordered as standing reserve which, in turn, may be called forth at a given time to reveal. Enframing is an "ordaining of destining." But, as Heidegger relates, this destining is not our fate, for we are free. Our freedom is not legislated or politicized (in its essence) but rather is the result of the proximate visitation of revealing and truth. Heidegger writes, "It is to the happening of revealing, i.e., of truth, that freedom stands in the closest and most intimate kinship."³

But that which frees is concealed and belongs to a mystery. As Heidegger writes:

All revealing comes out of the open, goes into the open, and brings into the open... Freedom is that which conceals in a way that opens to light, in whose clearing there shimmers that veil that covers what comes to presence of all truth and lets the veil appear as what veils. Freedom is the realm of the destining that at any given time starts a revealing upon its way.⁴

² Heidegger, The Question, 25.

³ Heidegger, The Question, 25.

⁴ Heidegger, The Question, 25.

However, it is possible and Heidegger thinks likely, that Enframing poses great danger to humanity in that the "ordaining of destining" may deny humanity the possibility of entering into "a more original revealing and hence to experience the call of a more primal truth."⁵

Yet in spite of and in the midst of this danger there is the "possible arising of the saving power... ."

How can this happen? Above all through our catching sight of what comes to presence in technology, instead of staring at the merely technological.

The essence of technology is in a lofty sense, ambiguous... When we look into the ambiguous essence of technology, we behold the constellation, the stellar course of the mystery.⁶

What Can This Mean for Video Production?

Video production essentially orders all that is seen and heard by the camera's eye and microphone's ear. This is standing reserve. In the editing room, the standing reserve is called forth and reordered in a sense of revealing. The video editor possesses freedom to order at will, and the result may be dangerous in the sense that persuasive power of the video may ordain a destining of revealing that

⁵ Heidegger, The Question, 28.

⁶ Heidegger, The Question, 33.

hinders the viewer from perceiving more original revealing or more primal truth.

However, the editor also possesses freedom to order the standing reserve in such a manner as to challenge forth or bring about a destining that reveals, in the best sense, truth. This is the saving possibility.

Through this we are not yet saved. But we are thereupon summoned to hope in the growing light of the saving power. How can this happen? Here and now and in little things, that we may foster the saving power in its increase. This includes holding always before our eyes the extreme danger.⁷

A Philosophical Foundation for Communications Theory?

Martin Heidegger did not write with an intent to inform communications theory. He wrote about Being and Time. The Question Concerning Technology was important to him as it informed the development of the philosophical pursuit of Being and Time and humanity. Yet in his quest for the essence of things, Heidegger seems to have lifted principles of reality that, in their truth, may be gleaned, examined, and potentially resignified in a less lofty - though equally grounded - more pragmatic approach to the art of communication theory.

⁷ Heidegger, The Question, 33.

Any sound theory of communication can be informed and influenced both in consideration and practice through dialogical interface with the philosophy of Heidegger.

Exploring the Saving Possibilities

The Biblical Concept of Redemption

The terms, "redeem," "redeemer," and "redemption" are derived from two Hebrew roots in the Old Testament.

[They] designate a process by which something alienated, or at least subject to alienation, may, in some circumstances, be recovered for its original owner by the payment of a sum of money. ⁸

Considering the cost of video technology, the last phrase of the above definition is, at least, appropriate.

The essential purpose of a redemptive act is to deliver or save something or someone. Theologically, redemption is considered to be God's saving purpose worked out in some manner.

Can the concept of redemption be used (at least implicitly) in a discussion of the saving possibilities of video technology? The position of this project is that it, indeed, can.

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Denten, R.C., "Redeem, Redeemer, Redemption," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, ed. George A. Buttrick, vol.4 (Nashville: Abingdon Press 1962), 21-22.

Some Possibilities for Production
Through Video Technology.

Worship. For some time worship services have been broadcast on television. We have come to think of several personalities when the term, "television evangelist" is mentioned. However, worship services do not convey the same aesthetic via video broadcast as in person. Many are offended by the technological intrusion into what they consider to be a personal, private act (though corporately experienced). In the author's opinion, video can enhance and serve as a conduit for religious experience when set inside another format that focuses primarily upon individual meditation.

Liturgical images. The history of religion has never been disassociated from symbols and images. Video technology can be incorporated into the local congregation's worship in several ways because we are primarily dealing with images. Paraments placed upon the altar are to provide a visual aesthetic; so too, are banners, candles, floral displays, garments of the clergy, acolytes, and more. With the placement of video monitors in a sanctuary, a variety of images can be shown easily. The first example of such a practice is the sermon illustration. Another example is the use of slides videotaped and set to music to

enhance the eucharistic experience ...to provide a call to prayer ... to offer an act of praise... or even to interpret the scripture as it is read. The possibilities are as vast as our creativity.

Leadership training. The typical congregation is organized by one clergy person and perhaps a part-time secretary; even in the large congregation, the several staff members carry many responsibilities. Training the membership of the congregation for service is a high priority of the clergy, but it is only one among many. Video is the most effective training tool that presently exists. The church can mobilize for mission in its contemporary setting once training programs are produced.

The Living Will. The concept of the "living will" is to videotape individuals as they express their opinions and preferences for the time past the end of their own life.

Entertainment. The creation of religious videos for entertainment purposes already exists within more theologically conservative groups. The practical effect of religious video for entertainment is to reenforce cultural values. This is one reason why at this time more conservative groups beyond the local church have a stronger sense of cohesiveness and shared culture than do more mainline groups who harbor disdain for the religious entertainment now broadcast.

Education. Video is the best educational instrument which we now possess. Text can be printed, demonstrations given, narration can explain, music to soothe, or any of the preceding in combination can be utilized to enhance the learning process. The possibilities are only as limited as the imagination of the producer.

A second emphasis under education is the training that a local congregation which actively produced such videos could provide to its membership. There are many tasks related to the production of a given videotape; production is a team effort at its best. A congregation can train members in highly marketable skills in the process of producing video that will enhance its own ministry.

The Video Visit. Video production can be for the purpose of communication. Some examples are; a bishop's visit with each congregation via video, a superintendent's message to the administrative committees within the district, a congregation's community Christmas greeting sent to a sister congregation. Communication can become more wholistic as we develop a greater vision through video technology.

Artistic expression. Although this category is somewhat different than the others listed it is mentioned because the Church, throughout the ages, has hosted the

finest of the fine arts. Fine art has always been recognized as a high (if not the highest) form of worship. It is as fine art that the Church must begin to perceive video and to host and support video artists as the Church has supported other artists in what we now call "classical" fields.

Evangelization. Evangelization is a by-product of each and all of the other categories listed. The church or group that actively pursues video programming will attract persons if for no other reason than how relevant their pursuit is to the cultural values which we now hold.

Mission appeal. This is the last possibility in our list because it is the broad category of the paradigm of this project. Mission appeal is the marketing of a particular of the church for the purpose of raising financial support and educational awareness.

The next chapter of this project concerns a demonstration of the saving possibilities of video technology in the category of mission appeal.

CHAPTER 4

The Paradigm

One of the challenges within the conceiving process of this project was to find a suitable match for Heidegger's concept of "Saving Possibilities" with a video production that could serve as a paradigm for the philosophical emphasis. The Mission of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church (Pomona, Ca.) was and is a suitable match. What follows is a description written by the pastor and the author for presentation to the Riverside (California) District Council on Ministries (and other groups) for the purposes of providing a brief introduction and an orientation to the make-up and ministry of the congregation in the funding process.

Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church:
Iglesia Metodista Unida Philadelphia

Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church is an ethnically diverse congregation of poor people. The con-

gregation hosts two worship services, one in English and a second in Spanish. It is the only Spanish language ministry of the Riverside District and it is the only Spanish language ministry of a main-line denominational congregation in the area. Within themselves, each of the two language ministries have several nationalities represented.

Thus the terms, "anglo" and "hispanic" are inappropriate for designating the two language groups. Administrative committee work is interpreted in both languages for all to participate. The two common bonds shared by the members of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church are poverty and Christ.

The congregation has ninety-five members. Of this total, fifty persons have joined the church in the past two years. Contrary to trends in the United Methodist Church, forty-seven of these persons have joined the church by confession of faith. Many of these persons had never before attended any church services.

Worship is the focus of the life of the church community offering a sense of dignity and participation that is absent from the scenes of the members' daily lives. Children and youth participate in each worship service as liturgists, acolytes, and ushers. Other opportunities for participation in worship include children's choir and liturgical dance group. Often at the Philadelphia Street

United Methodist Church, children and youth lead their parents to involvement in the life of the church. As a part of the liturgical life of the church, a food collection is taken and presented at each worship service at the altar. This food is offered to parishoners and community members each week.

The Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church is located in the heart of a vast mission field. Eighty-five percent of the residents of this south Pomona area do not attend any church.

The vision of the pastor, the Rev. Dr. Barbara Kilgore, and church leaders, is for a large church composed of poor people meeting the needs of the community and proclaiming the saving power of the Gospel.

In the conceptual process of this project there were other paradigmatic possibilities for a video production. The choice of Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church came relatively late; the video was shot just three weeks from the time of the insight.

The philosophic emphasis of Heidegger upon the "saving power" of technology required a paradigm that carried the weight of the concept, clearly illustrated and in a sense defined "saving power," and had an appeal to others in the sense of the marketability of the idea. In the instant that the possibility was raised every sense of the author responded affirmatively.

I had served in pulpit supply on two occasions. This knowledge of the people and the worship style was invaluable. I had also participated in a clergy support group with the pastor where we had discussed many of the challenges of the ongoing life of the congregation. The potential for cooperation and support of video production efforts by the congregation was great.

The strength of the concept of a mission appeal for the faltering Spanish language ministry seemed to be tremendous. After two quadrenniums of an "Ethnic Minority Local Church" emphasis within the denomination of the United Methodist Church, there were no hispanic ministries on the Riverside District.¹ The "saving power" of such an appeal seemed to be obvious.

Another aspect of the strength of the appeal within the context of the Church comes from Biblical witness concerning the poor and the dispossessed. In addition, the history and tradition of the United Methodist Church is one of social action and societal reform. These built-in factors provided an historical and theological foundation that made the necessary appeal for production resources a joy. To state this within the context of another discipline, this is a highly marketable concept.

¹
The Riverside District is comprised of fifty-three churches.

Events and Issues Surrounding the Shoot

Many of the activities and issues integral to the video shoot were overlapping in their areas of concern and chronology. Thus what follows is not a precise chronolgy but does raise the pertinent points.

Planning to Communicate.

In the preparation process, it is crucial to be clear about the goals and purposes of any communication attempt involving the resources and involvement of so many people. The more clearly these are stated at an early point in the process, the more likely it will be to accomplish defined purpose. As one portion of this process, I interviewed the pastor in order to clarify these concerns.² The time invested in this interview and the other organizational items preparing for the shoot totaled seventy-four hours. What follows are the results of the conversation as we defined and refined the nature of the video:

For whom is the video made? The primary anticipated viewers will be members of the United Methodist Church.

Why do they need to hear or see it? First, it should be viewed in order to learn of the existence and ministry

² Barbara Kilgore, interview, November 10, 1986.

of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church. Second, as a result of this exposure, the image of the United Methodist Church as a primarily middle or upper middle class denomination will be altered. It will provide another view of Methodism. Third, the connectional/conference "system" of the United Methodist Church encourages uniformity; this video will model another possibility with the potential to influence policy and policy makers from what presently exists as a pragmatic systems approach to a more flexible approach to policy as it relates to local congregations.

What is the message? The Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church is a mission headquarters located in a mission field that is not across the ocean. The congregation needs financial help in order to provide Spanish and English worship services and supporting programs. Missionary work requires an unusual spirit which is present at the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church.

Other key concepts. The Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church is a "Mission Control Center" specializing in "Visionary Discipleship." This is a poor church in a mission field of two languages. The people, though financially depressed, are "Rich in Spirit." They represent a gospel paradox. They are anxious to increase their

missional work. Others are generally startled to find this congregation of simple and frequently poor people who are eager to work in mission.

Professional Purpose of the Video. To impact the viewing audience (United Methodist Church) through an "aha" experience that contributes to our understanding of ourselves as a denomination and also enriches our self-identity as a denomination.

Paradigmatic Purpose of the Video. The video will serve as a model for future efforts to fund missional endeavors. The making of the video will have the effect upon the congregation of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church of what Heidegger terms the Flash effect.

Anticipated Results. Funding for the church as a result of future distribution and presentation of the video... initially within the Riverside District and then beyond. An impact will take place resulting in the perception that something unusual is taking place at Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church. Lastly, evangelization will occur on several levels as the video is made and distributed for viewing.

Organizing the resources

Video production is an expensive endeavor. Perhaps much of the reluctance of mainline churches to enter into this ministry centers upon this one issue. A conservative

estimate of the cost of such an endeavor as this one is ten thousand dollars. The budget for this video production was one thousand dollars; what follows is the accounting of how and why the production could be accomplished at this budget level.

The Commendation. Upon receiving a report concerning this project at their regular committee meeting, the Video Production and Consultation Task Force of the California - Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church took the following administrative action:

This project has been commended by the Video Task Force of the Conference Committee on Communications of the California-Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.³

The practical result of receiving this commendation was the sense of credibility assumed for further presentation of the project in enlisting resource support.

Funding. The next presentation was made to the Riverside District Council on Ministries at their regular meeting. The concern of that council was to take a bold step in a quest to fund the Spanish language ministry of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church. The council voted to fund the video project in the amount of one thousand dollars.

3

United Methodist Church, California-Pacific Conference, Video Task Force Meeting of the Communications Committee, November 28, 1986.

Equipment. There is no way that one thousand dollars could fund the rental of the necessary equipment in order to accomplish the shoot as envisioned by the author, thus other means were required.

The quality of the camera is essential to the final outcome of the video production because the present technology loses visual quality at each level of duplication. At least two generations of duplication are required to end up with a video for presentaion in either half or three quarter inch format. Through the generosity of the video ministry of the First United Methodist Church of Pasadena and particularly the senior minister, the Reverend Dr. George Mann, an excellent camera was made available for the shoot.

The idiosyncrasies of sound reproduction within the variety of contexts that the video was shot suggested the need for a collection of sound equipment. The Reverend Ken Wahrenbrock, inventor of the "Pressure Zone Microphone," was generous in his support of the project, and supplied microphones, cords, cables, mixers, tape recorder, and personal expertise.

Churches are notorious for their poor lighting, and Philadelphia Street was no exception. Dr. Steve Jackson, executive director of the Inter-Faith Media Center of the School of Theology at Claremont, Ca. supplied ten thousand watts of portable lighting equipment.

The crew. Rarely is a video production the work of one person. In this instance, the number of individual shots and the variety of locations around the physical plant of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church required a crew of multiple skilled persons. A crew of four, in addition to the author, worked on the project. They were provided an honorarium of ten dollars per hour; far below a standard rate for such work.

The budget. Half of the budget went toward honorariums for the crew. Another fifty dollars was used in order to provide meals (lunch and dinner) for the crew. This was done so that time would not be lost in transit to and from an eating establishment and also because the quality of the food could be controlled by making this arrangement in advance.

Another food item was a one hundred dollar expense toward the "production dinner." As there was a need to have as many congregation members present as possible for a lengthy time and considering the tendencies of the congregation concerning potluck meals, the pastor decided that a prepared meal should be offered. As she chose to underwrite that expense herself, the hundred dollars helped to underwrite the expense.

Schedules for the day of the shoot. A general schedule of the events on the day of the shoot was prepared

and distributed to crew members prior to the day of the shoot. It was a working document that, in its final state, represented four revisions. The general schedule is listed as Appendix A. In addition to setting up and breaking down, the shooting schedule was essentially composed of five segments. A continuing log was kept of each shot for future reference.

After arriving and assembling equipment and discussing our team approach, we collected outdoor establishing shots in order to be able to show the physical plant of the church.

This was followed by action shots of children of the church's Headstart Program at play in the yard. The intent was to keep the camera rolling and collect as much footage of children at play as possible within the time allotted.

After lunch, a series of interviews was conducted according to the scheduled listing in Appendix B. This proceeded roughly according to schedule.

After the dinner break, half of the crew shot "cameos" of the congregation at their dinner meal. The other half of the crew set up lights and sound in the sanctuary.

The sanctuary shots, Appendix C, began close to schedule but rapidly fell behind. The scheduling was too tight to follow because of the crew's consensus for the

need for several takes of some shots. Rather than concluding at 8:00 p.m. as was planned, the sanctuary shots lasted until 10:30 p.m. The breakdown took another hour and one half.

The time expenditure in terms of person-hours on the day of the shoot for the crew, the pastor, and an additional volunteer was ninety hours.

Guiding principles of the shoot. There were several overarching principles employed in the shoot. The first and most important was to communicate and demonstrate trust in the skills of the crew. Each of the crew members possessed unique gifts for video production and an attempt to instruct them in an area of their own expertise would have been foolish and demoralizing. As the day lengthened, this principle came strongly into play. While the author functioned as director, leadership was passed among the crew particularly in areas of their own strength.

During the interviews, none of the subjects (with the exception of the pastor) looked directly into the camera. This was done in order to promote the effect of the viewer overhearing a conversation. The effect was that when the pastor looked directly into the camera there would be a presentation made directly to the viewer. This would also affect the pacing of the final piece.

The Editing Process

Shooting the video is only the first portion of the necessary work of video production. The shoot is the collection of the resources necessary to assemble the edited master. In our Enframing model for video production, the shoot orders what the camera sees and microphone hears as standing reserve.

The editing machine, which consists of two professional three quarter inch video recorders and corresponding computer unit, is another crucial piece of video technology. The editing machine deals with one video track and two audio tracks for the purpose of assembling a video piece from the standing reserve. Typically, one rents time on a video editor at a rate between twenty-five and seventy-five dollars per hour. Again, Steve Jackson of the Inter-Faith Media Center provided the necessary editing time at no cost.

The first step in the editing process was to view the entire shoot. The shoot yielded two hundred minutes of videotape. The viewing was done with the intent of identifying worthy material - audio, video, and the combination of the two. Each shot was logged again with comments as to the relative strength of the shot.

After viewing the tape and reviewing the log, an

outline of a rough draft for the video was created; then the editing process began. The purpose of editing the rough draft was to work with the material and also to work with editing techniques due to the inexperience of the author.

After showing the rough draft to several persons and discussing their reactions to the material, a new outline for the final draft or, edited master, was created.

The typical editing process is built upon a storyboard which has been created prior to shooting video footage. This project did not employ that method. Instead, the planning isolated persons and activities that seemed to have good video potential and represented the life of the congregation. From the collection of this footage, the choices for material for the edited master were made.

The opening of the video orients the viewer to the physical plant and location of the church, while the narration defines the expectations for the viewing experience. This was done so that it would not be surprising to the viewer that the video concludes with a strong financial appeal. Following this the viewer sees typical worship activities of the church because worship is the dominant image people have of the life and purpose of a church. The children's music piece tells the story of children in the church in a concise yet warm manner.

The interview material was chosen on the strength of

the video footage of the spontaneous individual statements and serves to change the focus from an institution to a community of people.

The direction then shifts to speak directly (as much as the footage would allow) to the needs of the faltering Spanish Language Ministry. The bi-lingual celebration of the sacrament is both startling and effective in providing an image of a two-language congregation.

The closing music and narrative appeal combine the emotion of a well known song with a statement that articulates some of the cherished values of the United Methodist Church, while associating both with the Philadelphia Street congregation. The desired result is to elicit an affirmative response to the appeal.

Ecclesiastical Application

Distribution of the video. The mission appeal videotape for the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church was produced for two central purposes: (1) as a paradigm demonstrating the "saving possibilities" of technology; and (2) as a funding tool whose production was sponsored by the Council on Ministries of the Riverside District of the United Methodist Church.

The Council on Ministries is composed of clergy and

lay members representing the fifty-three local congregations of the district and convenes on a monthly basis to consider and implement program on a district-wide basis. Work areas such as education, status and role of women, evangelism, urban ministries, and mission are a few of the concerns the council addresses. The purpose of the Council on Ministries is described as follows:

The purpose of the district Council on Ministries shall be to assist local churches to minister more effectively; to serve as a channel of communication between the local churches, the Annual Conference Council on Ministries, and the general agencies of the Church; to initiate programs for the district; and to help the Annual Conference Council on Ministries in the performance of its functions. ⁴

The action of the district council, in conjunction with funding the videotape, committed itself to an active distribution of the videotape upon its completion. The district representative in the area of missions has establish visitation teams who are visiting each local congregation of the district in order to present the videotape and promote pledges (over a three year period) to the mission of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church. The district council set a goal of \$30,000 over the three year period.

⁴
United Methodist Church, Book of Discipline (Nashville: United Methodist Pub. House, 1984), par. 747.

Summary and Conclusion

This project began asking if there were any possibility of a redemptive use of technology. In chapter 2 the philosophic approach of Martin Heidegger was employed in questioning the essence of technology. Heidegger pointed to the the "danger" and the "saving power" inherent within technology. In chapter 3 the "Enframing Model for Video Production" was built employing Heidegger's concepts and some "Saving Possibilities of Video Production" described. Chapter 4 described the production process of a videotape that was funded, organized, shot, and edited with the dual nature of: (1) an academic paradigm and, (2) a funding tool for the mission of the Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church.

It is the hope of the author that this project actualizes a good example of the educational intentions of the faculty of the School of Theology at Claremont to creatively and wholistically prepare ministers for leadership in the future Church of Jesus Christ.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Shooting Schedule Philadelphia Street United Methodist Church November 20, 1986

8-9: Crew meet at Media Center. Load and transport equipment to Philadelphia Street UMC

9-10: set up

10-11: outdoor establishing shots

11-12: Head start program: outdoor and indoor...need groups of children...faces

12-1: lunch break ... sound technician arrives

1-2: Sound equipment arrives: sound system is set in sanctuary

1-4 interviews: 4 locations to be chosen as we go...start in Pastor's office

4-5 dinner break

5-6 dinner cameos

6-6:30 set up for sanctuary shots, cornucopia and empty sanctuary

6:30-8 sanctuary shots of worship activities

8:00 breakdown

APPENDIX B

Interviews: 1-4 p.m.

100 Cornish Rogers

Have you seen the character/spirit of the church change over the years? What are the possibilities for Urban ministry in this particular location? What do you see as the future for "the urban church" such as Philadelphia UMC?

130 Barbara Kilgore (pastor) prepared piece

200 Shirley Thomas

How do you feel about your church? How have you seen the church change?

215 Lee Day

Why are you so active in this church? What is it that you really like that is going on here?

What do you see as the future for this church?

You are the stewardship chair, not in terms of money...how is Phil. St. doing in stewardship?

230 Jeffrey Henry

What do you like about your church? What does the church mean to you? Will you offer a prayer for the church?

245 Amy Selfridge

What does this church mean to you? What would you like for others to know about Philadelphia UMC? What are your hopes for the future of the church?

300 Hillary Chrisley

Why did you choose to come to Philadelphia Street? How has the pastor influenced you? How have the people influenced you? How have you grown? Possibilities of span-lang ministry? Your vision?

Brandon Gebhart (student pastor) same

Howard Moses (student pastor: beginning seminary student)
same questions

315 Eva McQuillen

What does the church family mean to you? Can you tell about the time of your husbands' passing?

330 Bill and Roxie Tolbert

What has the church meant in your family life?
What is your vision for the future of Philadelphia Street?

345 Bill Woolsey

Bodacious braggers? ...your pastor? ...vision for the
future? How is God at work in Philadelphia Street today?

Leah Contreras

Why did you come to Philadelphia Street? What does a
Spanish language ministry at Philadelphia Street mean to
this neighborhood? What is your vision for developing the
Spanish language ministry?

Mercedes Salinas

How has God touched your life here? What are the
possibilities you see for Spanish language ministry?

APPENDIX C

Shots Within the Sanctuary 6:30-8:00 p.m.

There are changing camera locations during this segment; each is within a 25 foot radius. Lighting switches will be required in addition to camera position. Sound will run through a four channel mixer, four mics, minor adjustments will be made for each shot.

what? who? where? from?

EMPTY SANCTUARY

1.establishing shot- cornucopia- center- center/offcenter

2.establishing shot-empty chancel-center-center/offcenter

ENTER CHILDREN'S CHOIR

3.children's song-children's choir-center on steps-center
/offcenter

EXIT CHILDREN.

ENTER QUARTET & DANCERS

4.Lord's Prayer-dancers & quartet-center & below pulpit
(2 takes)

EXIT QUARTET AND DANCERS

ENTER SCOTT, HILLARY, BARBARA, MERCEDES, HELEN.

5.psalm read-acolyte-pulpit-center

6.invocation-Hillary-pulpit-center

7.scripture read-Barbara-pulpit-center

8.solo-Mercedes-center-left

9.trumpet solo-Helen-right center-left

ENTER CHOIR

10.introit-choir-chancel/choir loft-left

11.anthem-choir-chancel/choir loft-left

ENTER CONGREGATION

12.communion-Kilgore/Salinas- center-center, then right

13.passing peace-congregation-pews-chancel

14."let there be peace"- congregation- pews-chancel

EXIT CONGREGATION

15.offertory/dox ushers & child moving

17.organ/piano-Woolsey/DeBeeson-piano/organ-chancel-center

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